7/12/77

Mr. Michael S. Cohen
1949 Sunnyside
Northbrook, Ill. 60062

Dear Mr. Cohen,

There is a risk in using felt-tipped pens holding washable ink in addrssing envelopes. They run if wet. I hipe I have made your addess out correctly.

Your amplifications of 7/8 are helpful. They leave questions in my mind, however.

I have no way of knowing what you consider nutty and you do not really know what I do. I do not know how fairly you will represent my work. As an example of what I mean by this when I learned what had been selected of my work for the anthology The Assassinations. It is not representative. It is used out of context. I asked that it be removed but the publisher declined to do this. I would prefer not to be mentioned~~th n~~ than to be misused in such a manner.

On the other hand your offer to let me read what you use is quite fair, except that this would limit it to the immediate textual use. And with my present medical restrictions there is a limit to the time I can spend off my own work, for which I lack sufficient time as it is.

Complicating all of this is my abborance of censorship. Were I to regard you work as unreasonable and irresponsible, there is no question of your right to write and published whatever you want to publish.

I have no question about your 2, quoting me on the Paine garage.

Nor do I to your 1, what I wrote about Hoover and the possibilities of a shot from ouston Street. What here troubles me is that you describe his testimony as his "deposition." The depositions were taknen by members of the staff with no member of the Commission or anyone other than the court reporter present. The distinction is considerable and raises questions in my mind about your knowledge. The is further worrisome because you appear to be limited to my first book, which while a fair representation of my work, knowledge and opinion as of the time of completion, 2/15/65, and of copyrighting, 8/17/65, is hardly repreeentative ~~at~~ of all of my work and in no way pr represents the body of it or what I came to learn and believe - and not be;ieve. If you know no more than this about my work, what is more than a dozen years in the past, can you see my concern about your ability to represent it fairly, even your qualifications for the task you say you have undertaken?

You emphasize "credible" critics, using only George Thompson, misspelled this way, as an example of other than credible. In my view most of those commonly regards as "critics" differ from Thomson (correct) in degree only. I have ~~in~~ no desire to be equated with them or used in any way to give credibility to others.

I have no intention of trying to influence your judgement, as of credibility. Or what you write. I do not want to be associated with what you write or what you believe. It seems to me the simplest solution is to state in your citation of my work that I have not opposed quotation of it as you see fit to quote it without taking any position on your use or interpretation of it.

We are in basic disagreement if you consider that those you regard as "credible critics" have speculation of theorized on "who dunnit."

Your breakown into 3 chapters, which I do not take to be the entire book, has an undescribed ~~III~~ II. I take it you have no use of me in your pre-report part. This is a logical conclusion without inquiry but it is not faithful. I lost my agent the week

after the assassination when I insisted that a critical story be offered to magazines. I began before this with a major newspapers. I continued afterward with other publications. You equate successful censorship with inactivity. I don't really care but authentic scholarship requires more than assumption.

There are other areas of vast importance of which you indicate no awareness. I cannot visualize a competent, information, dependable work with such enormous omissions not can I conceive of it being done by authorsso lacking in elemental knowledge.

I do into this and take this time in your interest, as you may not recognize immediately and may unwilling to face. Your letters reflect an inadequate knowledge of the subject matter in even those areas you mention.

I apologize for not taking the time to correct my always very bad typing. The kind of letter represented by this one of yours is not uncommon in my mail. The time required for any response accumulates into much time for one of my age, physical condition and work-schedule and plans. I'd rather not ignore them, rather risk being misunderstood.

I believe that in responding earlier I asked that you restrict yourself to what is customary in a review. I have no objection to this in a book as long as I am not associated with the book. Perhaps the simplest way to do this would be for you to indicate where you list credits and acknowledgements that I granted permission for such use as is customary in reviews without selecting the passages used, taking any position on your book or knowledge of your beliefs.

The work you describe incompletely does not impress me as one of authentic scholarship. Your letters do not lead me to believe that you have the knowledge required for authentic scholarship. These are sufficient for me to want not to be connected with the work in any way. I do not limit your first-amendment rights in granting you what would be granted in a review. Because you are writing a book and not a review I believe it is proper to ask for the disclaimer.

You have said that you and David Callender are writing a book. You have not said that you have a publishing contract or arrangement. My own experience in the field leads me to believe that you do not have a publisher and are not likely to obtain one. Moreover, you have no idea of the "facts uncovered" and you do say that theories also are ~~[illegible]~~ "uncovered." Any sophisticated publisher's reader or editor whose knowledge of the facts was limited to a recollection of what the major-city papers have carried would have serious questions based only on what you have written me. If there were to be any checking of your selections against the actual content of my first book alone it would be apparent that from it you have avoided the most important of the "facts uncovered" Your selections then would be interpreted, properly I believe, as angle to advance theories rtaher than presenting the basic "facts uncovered."

I know disappointments and disillusionments. I have taken extra time to help you avoid what will in all probability be unpleasant experiences for both of you.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg